

Appendix A.6

The Hill Lesson

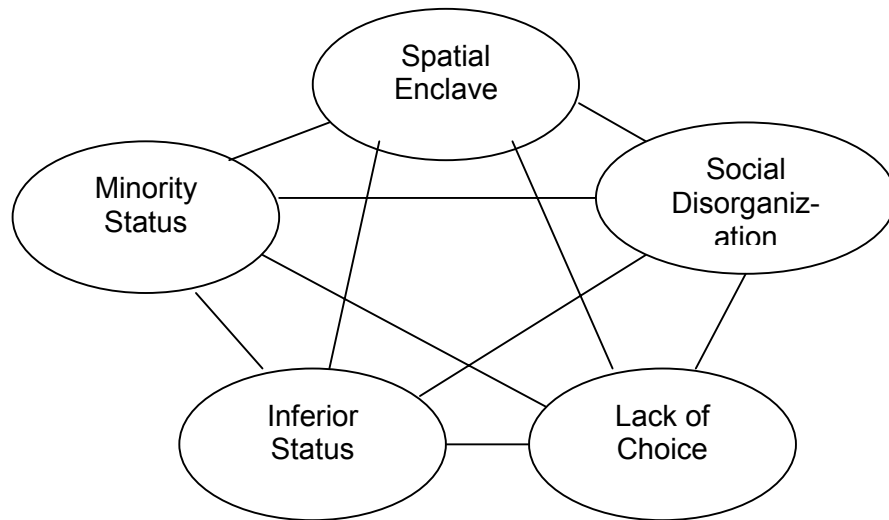
Condensed form of Mason (1971) article:

Until the mid-1960s, [---] was a small town with a rural, conservative perspective within the shadow of its largest employer, the University of [---]. The physical and cultural setting of [---] seemed to have an unusual attraction for alumni and friends of the University, and many companies, recognizing the community appeal, located and/or expanded operations in [---]. As [---] has grown and its urban pattern changed, the University has expanded as well. Change has also occurred within the student-youth community. The proportion of students living off campus increased. Moreover, the desirability of the University Hill area, formerly the highest class residential district for the city, decreased as the student and non-student population increased in the area. Increases in crime, drug abuse, and related problems specific to the youth community fostered negative reaction within the larger community.

THE GHETTO CONCEPT AND THE GHETTO MODEL

This article looks at [---] through a “Ghetto Model.” “Hill hippies represent an element of instability and change – interpreted as a threat to business-as-usual. In 1966, when the scene first started growing, the opposition immediately took shape. Laws aimed specifically at that group were drafted and passed. Some were struck down by the courts, but others remain and do nothing but increase the animosity and lessen the respect of the street freaks toward the city and the stores. Those laws do not solve the problem. They are, in part, the problem. Progressive [---] must listen and then act. The Hill must not become a ghetto.” (The Colorado Daily, 18 June 1971).

Is the student-youth community a ghetto? Some are willing to concede ghetto status; others resist such admission. In this paper a ghetto model will be employed as an analytical tool for use in exploring some of the related aspects of the community. The model includes the following elements (1) spatial enclave; (2) minority status; (3) inferior status; (4) lack of choice; and (5) social disorganization.



SPATIAL ENCLAVE

A ghetto is an urban subsystem that often enjoys limited social interaction with the larger community. West and north of campus are the longest-settled student sections; areas containing most community focus; identifiable landmarks, off-campus student activity, and a higher student population. A sample of 106 students revealed that 45% lived in the regional core; 25% in the transition zone; 17% in the fringe; and 12% beyond the fringe. To the east of campus students occupy newer housing areas, most of which consist of closely spaced and poorly constructed apartment buildings. Problems of overcrowding, and architectural and neighborhood monotony are most prominent in this apartment area. Student confinement to a relatively specific area reinforces the concept of spatial enclave. The limits of youth ghetto space in [---] are a reasonable basis for looking at the area as different from the entire [---] community, physically and culturally.

MINORITY STATUS

Minority status implies that a population of a minority group demonstrates little social interaction with the larger outside community. Minority status may be ethnic, racial, age-set, or occupational. Where youth groups dominate the population as an age-specific minority group, and secondarily as an occupational (student) minority, a basis for a youth ghetto exists. In [---], most occupants of the youth ghetto are under twenty-five years of age and are university students; the remainder of the population are somewhat older and occupationally classified as non-students, including such types as transients, street people, mountain people, or drug freaks.

INFERIOR STATUS

A questionnaire was used to obtain a student perspective of the general characteristics of the youth ghetto. Five of the ten leading characteristics offered by respondents were negative, including high rent, substandard apartments, crowded living conditions, high prices, and transients (as sources of problems within the

community). Some of the least desirable characteristics of the student community, listed by the students are the presence of transients, high rent, and poor housing. The youth ghetto, therefore, seems to be perceived as inferior by both the students of the community and the larger population; an urban subsystem to be avoided, to be handled differently from the larger urban system, and to be vacated at the earliest opportunity by a larger proportion of students.

Housing problems seem to be a basis for widespread discontent within the youth ghetto. The so-called "invasion-and-takeover" of single family neighborhood areas by youth has prompted mass abandonment by the original owner-occupant group. Loss of diversity in neighborhoods surrounding the University as a result has been one cause of community instability.

Community health problems are poorly documented in the youth ghetto. This is partly because most health services are developed to serve the non-ghetto. Communicable diseases, for example hepatitis and gonorrhea, increased 43% and 134% respectively between 1969 and 1970 in [---] County. A general consensus among Health Department officials blames the anonymity and high degree of mobility of much of the student population for the failure to find effective solutions to these problems.

Crime in the youth ghetto is often related to drug abuse. Of the police activity registered for the first portion of 1971, 44% was related to the Hill area and, of this, 31% was related to drug abuse. The pattern of drug abuse, including marijuana and more limited use of hard drugs is intensified within the youth ghetto. Of 600 alcohol drug-abuse contacts made in 1970 at the Health Department, approximately 150 individuals were addicted to heroin, a 30% increase over the previous year. [---] is a major market for drugs, and the casual setting, the cover provided by the large youth population, and the relative privacy of small nearby mountain towns, provide an excellent opportunity for traffic of drugs. For those seeking drugs or drug information, "the street" – 13th Street and College Avenue on the Hill provides a convenient marketplace.

A youth ghetto is to a large degree politically inferior. Municipal government is more responsive to larger community needs, whereas the youth ghetto residents see only the more restrictive characteristics of government.

LACK OF CHOICE

Ghetto residents usually lack free choice in housing, employment, recreation, and other activities, and commonly enjoy only the freedoms allowed by the larger society. For youth, the question of choice relates to the operation of the housing market in providing space for the youth student group. Most housing available to this group is confined to areas connected to campus. New housing areas become available as the pressure of the student population increases. Owner-occupants simply relocate on the urban perimeter. Population pressure creates a fairly intensive demand for limited residential space contiguous to campus which, of course, tends to inflate rents.

SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION

Social disorganization often develops where a community becomes unstable. This is often where a break occurs in the continuation of cultural traits between generations, through basic family patterns. Societies with slow social change enjoy community stability based in large part on the existence of the extended family. The youth culture has a higher population replacement and turnover. A community with a large proportion of its population on a somewhat unstable emotional fringe provides the basis for social disorganization, high crime, community dysfunction, riot, and finally community repression.

